Dollars and Sense  President Taylor interprets the Governor’s proposed budget, which looks good for community colleges.  Page 2

Senate Selects  A reinvigorated Classified Senate elects officers and shared governance committee representatives.  Page 3

Aggie Pride  After 35 years, Karen Wallace is still keeping things running smoothly in the Agriculture Division. Not bad for a city girl!  Page 6

**Water Logged**

A crew from Merced-based Johnson Industrial joined Maintenance and Operations staff in repairing a water main that had cracked beneath the asphalt service road on the east side of the cafeteria on January 22. The repair job went smoothly and the area has been resurfaced. Good job to all!

*Photo by Robin Shepard*
2014 Proposed Budget is an Improvement
Growth Funding, Deferred Maintenance, Student Support Included

By Dr. Ron Taylor
Superintendent/President

As spring begins to dawn, and glimmers of brighter light begin to warm us, it does seem as though the ice has cracked. Part of this early thaw is the state budget proposal that the Governor unveiled on December 9. It is a good budget, all in all, and I hope it stays more or less intact as it moves through the legislature. Several of us attended a workshop in Sacramento and learned about the particulars. I owe you an overview.

It is important to remember that the Governor’s proposed budget for 2014-2015 is just a proposal. It has a long way to go to become law, and on the way a few elements will probably shift. Still, it is striking how much better this budget is than those of the last few years. I have not seen a proposal this positive since at least 2008.

That said, there are reasons to proceed with caution, as was pointed out to us in Sacramento. While state revenues have been increasing markedly, the overall economy is a different story. All parties agree that the slow economic recovery continues. It is over four years since the recovery started, and the country still has yet to recover all of the jobs lost in the crash. California, which has lagged the nation as a whole, is now showing signs of comparative strength: state unemployment has fallen more quickly in recent months (from 9.8 percent in 2012 to 8.5 percent in 2013) than the national rate.

The sluggish economy, taken together with the way California taxes itself, give us reason for caution. Much of the increase in state revenues is due to capital gains income, which in turn is driven by the stock market—and as a source of state revenue, it is volatile and uncertain. Also, the experts reminded us that Proposition 30, passed in November 2012, drives much of the increase—and it is a temporary source of state funds (the largest portion begins to sunset in 2018). Finally, they noted that history would indicate another recession in the next three or four years.

The Governor’s proposal for community colleges includes the following elements:
- COLA of +0.86% (a statutory requirement);
- +3 percent of growth/restoration funding;
- Elimination of the payment deferrals that have been causing us cash flow problems;
- $100 million increase for the Student Success and Support Program;
- $100 million to support underrepresented students;
- $87.5 million for facilities repairs (“deferred maintenance”);
- $87.5 million for instructional equipment;
- Prop. 39 funds for energy efficiency projects;
- No changes to student fees;
- An incentive fund to encourage higher education programs that will increase completion of bachelor’s degrees.

There are also some policy elements in the Governor’s budget proposal:
- Continued funding increases for education from Prop. 30, while at the same time asking the higher education segments to find ways to streamline degree completion.
- He asks the Board of Governors to develop a funding formula that will shift the emphasis away from funding enrollment, toward addressing “unmet needs” in basic skills, workforce development, and transfer.
- He plans to support adult education going forward, as each region develops a plan for this. (As I write this, we are preparing to join together with the local high school district and others in our area to build a coalition to address adult education needs.)

As the Governor’s proposal works its way through the legislature, it appears that the most controversial elements center around a) whether legislators will listen to cities, counties and human services departments as they cry out for restoration of their cuts, as opposed to favoring education (90% of the new revenues in the budget go to education); b) a proposed constitutional adjustment to create a “rainy day fund” that will include a reserve account for Prop. 98 (education funding); and c) substantial pension liabilities (especially CalSTRS, for which the legislature may adjust contribution rates).

For Merced College, the good things in the Governor’s budget will remain good for us locally—the emphasis on funding student success, facilities and equipment funding, etc. The cautionary factor for us locally is the fact that the Governor’s budget includes +3 percent growth/restoration, and this will be based on enrollment levels compared to previous years. Our enrollment level currently is almost exactly even...

―Come, gentle Spring, ethereal mildness, come;
And from the bosom of yon dropping cloud,
While music wakes around, veiled in a shower
Of shadowing roses, on our plains descend.

As yet the trembling year is unconfirmed,
And Winter oft at eve resumes the breeze,
Chills the pale morn, and bids his driving sleets
Deform the day …”

James Thomson, The Seasons, 1728

See Budget, page 8.
MC Responds to Recent Campus Vandalism

Staff Asked to Remain Vigilant and Report Any Problems

The Merced Campus suffered a wave of vandalism since the Christmas break. Miscreants cut down a redwood tree at the corner of Yosemite and M streets, and six Coca-Cola machines were smashed. A window in the Bookstore was also broken. In response and to help deter more vandalism, lights around campus have been programmed to remain on through the night, including on weekends and holidays. Coca-Cola will be removing the damaged machines and installing new units as possible. If you see vandalism at either campus, contact the Maintenance & Operations Department at Ext. 6134.

Photos by Robin Shepard

Classified Senate Selects Officers and Representatives

By Charlene Reed
Secretary, Area 6

As of January 23, a transitional Classified Senate Board and Shared Governance representatives were voted in by Classified Senate members.

The Transitional Classified Senate Board is:
- President: Charlene Reed
- Vice-President: Toni McCall
- Secretary: Vacant
- Treasurer: Kristi Wolf

Classified Senate Shared Governance Members are:
- College Council: Charlene Reed (New)
- Budget Committee: Toni McCall (New, replaces Wilma Prine), Richard “Z” Zeunges, Manuel Costa (Alternates)
- ASMPC: Wilma Prine, Jeanne Bernardi (New), Manuel Costa (Alternate)
- IMPC: Kristi Wolf (New)
- SSMPC: Robbie Deen (New)
- SSSPAC: Robert Olivera, Robbie Deen (New)
- EMPC: Need 2 representatives
- FMPC: Shannon Gragg
- Foundation: Need 1 representative
- Strategic Planning: Shannon Gragg, Need alternate
- Standing Accreditation: Need 1 representative

Classified members who are interested in participating in Classified Senate receive one hour of approved release time to attend Senate meetings, as well as approved release time to attend Shared Governance Committee meetings.

If you are interested in representing Classified Senate on a Shared Governance Committee, you will need to attend the meetings and report out to Classified Senate by either attending the Senate meeting or by sending an e-mail to a member of the Senate Board.

If you are interested in participating in the Classified Senate either as a member or in one of these remaining positions, please inform me as soon as possible by e-mail.

Please visit the Classified Senate website at https://mc4me.mccd.edu/organizations/class-senate/default.aspx.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at Ext. 6067 or by e-mail at charlene.reed@mccd.edu.

Thank you!
Health Care Adviser to Visit Both Campuses

In 2010, Congress passed The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) to increase the number of Americans with health insurance while cutting the costs of healthcare. It plans to do that by making private insurance more affordable and by expanding Medi-Cal.

As of January 1, most adults are required to have some form of health insurance coverage or pay a fine.

If you have not yet obtained some form of health insurance, a certified educator and/or certified enrollment counselor will be available at Merced College on the following dates to assist you with the process:

**Los Banos Campus**
Student Lounge
Monday, Jan. 27 from 9 to 11 a.m.
Thursday, Jan. 30 from 9 to 11 a.m.

**Merced Campus**
Quad (Student Health Services in the event of rain)
Wednesday, Jan. 29 from Noon to 2 p.m.
Monday through Friday, Feb. 3-7 from 9 a.m. to Noon.
For more information, contact Student Health Services at Ext. 6045.

District News: Odds & Ends

**Key Control**
Since the retirement of a long time employee, the department has been trying to maintain the status quo. Now that the semester is under way, an assessment of the key process will begin. Until a new, more streamlined process can be implemented, contact Joe Bisinger at 6301 and he will be able to assist you.

**Librarian Publishes Paper**
Congratulations to Electronic Resources Librarian Nancy Golz, whose paper “Web 2.0 and Emerging Communication Technologies in Community College Libraries” was accepted by the American Educational Research Association for presentation at its annual national conference in April. The Association received over 12,000 submissions this year.

**ITS prototype timelines**
Mid-February: The first test of the MS SQL for Colleague will be performed. Mid-March: Initial testing of the virtual desktop interface system will occur.

Other future projects: Microsoft has released Office 13 and a date to upgrade will need to be identified. Along with this upgrade, the XP operating system has been dropped for support forcing computers to either run OS 7 or OS 8.

The new CCC Apply system is also ready for initial testing.
Employee Giving Increases

The Foundation’s employee giving campaign culminated in December with a drawing for an iPad Air, which was won by Nursing Professor Gloria Provencio. Employee giving increased by 118 percent! The Foundation thanks all who participated in making the fall campaign a success. The Foundation will launch its spring enrollment campaign with a barbecue kick-off luncheon on February 5.

Board of Trustees Approves Wayfinding Project Contract

The Board of Trustees awarded the Wayfinding Project to Turner Signs and Graphics at its January 7 Meeting.

We received six bids, with Turner Graphics being the lowest responsive and responsible bidder with a total bid of $217,600. The project is funded through School Facilities Improvement District 1 (SFID-Merced) Bond funds.

The bid includes two additive alternates, which would provide sub-monuments for the Los Banos Campus and Business Resource Center. We are pleased to link the three locations together with modern, cohesive monument signs.

The contractor has 150 days to complete the project. Be on the lookout for Construction Updates via mc-all.

Proposition 39: Clean Energy Jobs Act

Proposition 39 provides $332,639 to the Merced Community College District on an annual basis for the next five years. There are stringent guidelines to qualify for Proposition 39 funding.

Working with PG&E, we have arrived at the projects below for the Los Banos Campus at a total cost of $274,852. We applied for a rebate which will offset the total cost by $20,916, and we’ll be requesting Proposition 39 funds in the amount of $253,936.

• Los Banos Campus Lighting: Interior lighting retrofits to low watt T8s, with some daylighting controls in areas such as lobbies and the library;
• Desktop Virtualization: Replace 108 existing desktop computers in the four campus computer labs with Wyse thin clients;
• Window Film: Install window film on classroom windows;
• Domestic Water Heater: Replace domestic hot water heater, using the Express incentive.

Working with the Merced Irrigation District, we have determined that we can replace the Variable Frequency Drives (VFD) on two pool pumps at a cost of $33,384. MID has approved a rebate in the amount of $8,177, and we’ll be requesting Proposition 39 funds in the amount of $25,207.

Because there will be approximately $53,000 remaining out of the 2013-2014 allocation, we will be reviewing energy audits that have been prepared for the District, as well as the list of budget reduction recommendations that were generated in 2012. From these reports, we will identify potential projects to spend our remaining allocation for 2013-14.

We welcome any suggestions for energy saving projects, so please feel free to share any ideas you may have with me at flores.sh@mccd.edu.

Board of Governors Revise Fee Waivers

SACRAMENTO – California community college students receiving fee waivers will have to meet minimum academic and progress standards to remain eligible for the financial assistance under new regulations adopted today by the California Community Colleges Board of Governors.

The new policy, which takes effect in Fall 2016, is a key component of the Board of Governors’ Student Success Initiative. The new regulations will work in concert with statewide enrollment priorities that will go into effect in fall 2015 to encourage students to focus on their classes and seek help when they face difficulties.

“We will do everything in our power to help students on financial aid succeed, but students need to know that they have a responsibility to keep up their end of the bargain,” said California Community Colleges Chancellor Brice W. Harris.

“This policy provides students with incentives to meet standards that will ultimately help them achieve their educational goals. It benefits students and it is responsible stewardship of state resources.”
Karen Wallace Reflects on 35 Years of Working at MC
Division Secretary is the Unofficial Historian of Ag Division

Although she's worked for a few 'old goats' in her long tenure as the Agriculture Division secretary, Karen Wallace still loves coming to work every day. The self-professed 'city girl' feels right at home on the college farm.

By Robin Shepard
Public Information Officer

It’s been 35 years since Karen Wallace first stepped foot on the Merced College campus. Today, she's the District’s longest serving classified employee. The fact that she's carved out a long career here, and that she's remained in one area, speaks well of her work ethic and enthusiasm for her job.

“Karen truly embodies what Merced College is all about,” said Dean Jim Andersen. “She embraces the needs of each student and staff member as if they are family, no exceptions! Her devotion to supporting the college mission, combined with the enduring enthusiasm she has for her profession is unparalleled.”

In its December meeting, the Board of Trustees unanimously passed a resolution of appreciation recognizing her devotion to education, high ethical and performance standards, and loyalty as a member of the classified staff.

Wallace takes all that in stride. “I do enjoy what I do, and I try to do it well,” she said.

When she began her employment in 1978, an entirely different Agriculture department was in place, with different personalities and different ideas. Those were the days of Bob Barrett, Gary Clausen, Les McCabe, and Jeff Tassey.

“The old regime was kind of the founders of the department,” she said. “I feel like I was lucky to almost be on the ground floor. And then they all retired almost at the same time, within a couple years of each other.”

See Wallace, page 8.
The City of Merced is planning events to celebrate its 125th Anniversary. Merced College staff is taking part in the planning meetings and the MC Library has collected a display of Merced-related books. If you have any suggestions for anniversary activities, contact Ron Taylor at Ext. 6101, Susan Walsh at Ext. 6082, or Robin Shepard at Ext. 6470.

Photo by Susan Walsh

City of Merced: Still Going Strong!

Student Writes Letter to President Taylor

Dear Dr. Taylor:

My name is Edwin Betady, I currently work for the college police department and am an engineering student at Merced College. The reason I am emailing you is because I received some exciting news over my winter break.

I was accepted into the NASA Aerospace Scholars program during the 2013 fall semester, and was working with NASA online learning more about Mars. The application was open to college students throughout the entire nation.

During the online portion, NASA held webinars with us and provided us with course work to better understand Mars and our past missions to Mars. The overall objective of this was for us to build our own mission to Mars; the mission would be to send a rover up there. The mission had to include a launch date, a 3D model of our rover, full explanations of the parts on our rovers and scientific data that backed our mission, as well as a landing site that was also supported with scientific data.

On top of that, we had a budget and a timeline to follow and had to build a poster that would interest investors in our mission. After the grading of our our rovers and coursework, the top students would be selected to attend a fully paid trip to go and work with some of their engineers at a NASA site. I made the final cut and was selected to go to the NASA Jet Propulsion Lab in February to work on a project.

I am sharing this with you because I wanted you to know, and I wanted to make Merced College proud. It is amazing news for me, but also an eye opener for my peers that we are capable of accomplishing great things. I hope that this means something to Merced College, because the faculty is absolutely amazing and I could have not done this without their support.

Names I would like to throw out there are, Lana Jordan, Tina Akers-Poter, Mr Davies, Jim Retemeyer, Denisha Dawson, Krista Wilson, and Brandon Tenn. These are just a few teachers that have really been there for me and have supported me and my dreams. This program started with 350 students, and was narrowed down to only 40. Half will go to the JPL and the other half to another NASA site.

Shelly Attix Joins Workplace Team as New Director

Merced College’s new director of the Workplace Learning Resource Center comes to us from Austin Community College in Texas.

Shelley Attix is an experienced manager of workforce training programs and worked for more than 25 years as a consultant within the field of community-based tourism (eco-heritage and adventure tourism). She’s worked in many destinations from Europe to the Caribbean, and held a graduate internship in New Zealand. She also joined a South Pacific/Melanesian trade mission, and worked as an adjunct instructor with the University of Hawaii-Manoa.

Attix has experienced work in almost every travel sector and understands what it takes to succeed in the business. As the WpLRC director, she will act as the state deputy sector navigator for Retail, Hospitality and Tourism programs for the Central Valley & Mother Lode regions.

Attix was a tenured instructor in Tourism & Recreation Management” at Columbia College in Sonora from 2001 to 2006. She holds a master’s degree from the George Washington University.
Wallace
Continued from page 6.

“Then new young blood came in and freshened things up, and they’re just an incredible group of people. They’re my family just as the first group was, but in a different way.”

Though she’s had other opportunities to move to other positions around campus, she found that she had made a home in the Ag area. According to Wallace, money and position were never as important as staying and working with her Ag “family.”

And that includes students.

“We have awesome students, and we enjoy working with them,” she said. “They’re great students, and we’re different from other divisions because we interact with the same kids day in and day out.”

A self-proclaimed “city girl,” Wallace was born in Pasadena. And though she still lives within the city limits, she seems at home among the country kids and the various animals on the college farm. Agriculture, you might say, has become her culture.

Her proudest moment, though she’s somewhat reluctant to admit it, is when she was named Outstanding Classified Employee of the Year in 1995.

“It sounds self-centered, but that meant a lot to me,” she said.

As she faces her eventual retirement, she has some apprehension about what that will mean for the Ag Division.

“After 35 years, I’m kind of the unofficial historian of the department. That’s the one thing I will worry about. Who will appreciate and preserve the character of the program?”

Budget
Continued from page 2.

with last year—i.e., no growth yet. We will need to do everything we can to support enrollment growth at the college, so as to take advantage of this allocation.

As the spring thaw continues, and as winter warms into summer, let’s hope that a budget at least as good as the Governor’s is approved by the legislature.